



EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE SOUTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3017154

Address: 800 23rd Avenue South

Applicant: Julian Weber Architecture + Design

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, July 22, 2014

Board Members Present: Stephen Yamada-Heidner, Chair
Amoreena Miller
Drew Hicks
David Sauvion

Board Members Recused: Julian Weber

DPD Staff Present: Holly Godard, planner

SITE & VICINITY

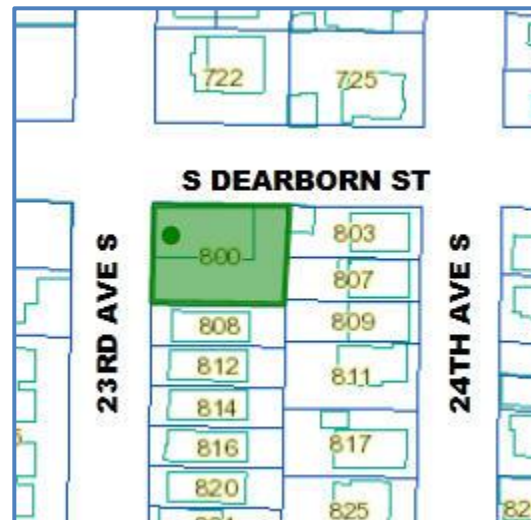
Site Zone: NC1-30

Nearby Zones: (North) NC1-30
(South) NC1-30
(East) LR1
(West) NC1-30

Lot Area: 7,498 square feet

Current Development:

The current development is a one-story warehouse.



Surrounding Development and Neighborhood Character:

The surrounding development is a mix of small commercial uses, multifamily uses and single family homes.

Access:

Access to the site is available via 23rd Avenue South and South Dearborn Street. There is no alley in this block.

Environmentally Critical Areas:

No environmentally critical areas are mapped at this site.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project proponents propose to build a combination of commercial uses (live/work) and residential units with some surface parking.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE

The packet includes materials presented at the meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3017154) at this website:

http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp.

The packet is also available to view in the file, by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

Mailing Public Resource Center

Address: 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

Email: PRC@seattle.gov

ARCHITECT PRESENTATION

The architect presented the site location and described the site surroundings, access, land use zoning in the area and neighborhood context. She outlined the project objectives and mixed use nature of the concept. She presented three conceptual plans which exhibit three massing alternative each with a different combination of live/work units and single family residences. Scheme 1 is a code compliant alternative with seven live/work units and one single family residence. In this site configuration four live/work units face 23rd Avenue South and three along south Dearborn Street. The residential unit is located mid-site along the south property line.

Vehicle access to five parking spaces is located at the east property line. Since the concept meets all zoning code development standards no departures are requested.

Scheme 2 is an alternative with four live/work units and four single family residences. The configuration also has four live/work units lined up along S. Dearborn Street. The four single family residences are clustered quad style with five vehicle parking spaces and drive aisles in the center court. These units are pushed within three and five feet of the east and south property lines. The architect described how departures from percentages of street level use and setbacks above 13 feet would be needed to realize this design.

Scheme 3 is an alternative with two live/work units, two multifamily townhouses, and four single family residences. The amount of commercial space is limited to two live/work units located at the corner of 23rd Avenue S and S. Dearborn and are situated side by side along S. Dearborn Street. Next to the live/work are two townhouse units facing S. Dearborn. The residential units are clustered at the back of the site in a quadrangle configuration with vehicle access between the units and six parking spaces located in the center courtyard. Departures are contemplated for street level use percentages, setbacks above 13 feet, and driveway widths.

Units are three and four story units with roof top decks. In scheme 3 the rooftop deck is replaced by a pitched roof for the two eastern units.

BOARD QUESTIONS

The Board had several questions about the configurations of the schemes 1-3, residential uses, and the nature of live/work unit occupancy preferences.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Six members of the public were present. Several members of the public commented on the proposal schemes. Comments included the following:

- Retain solar exposure for neighbors to the east who have gardens and solar panels.
- Setback the buildings as far as possible from the east property line where there is a zone edge to multifamily zone.
- Plan and control any side yards so they are not open to public trespass.
- Retain and protect street trees on S. Dearborn.
- Design and plan for street lighting, unit lighting and low level landscape lighting in an effort to complete the design intent and in an effort to deter illegal activity.
- Consider EV vehicle charging for the development.
- Setback buildings at the corner of 23rd and Dearborn to create better visibility for vehicle and pedestrians.
- Make extra efforts to control fugitive dust during construction.
- Limit or prohibit windows on east facades to help give privacy to multifamily zone.
- Take care to organize window placement, trash and other activities along the south property line to avoid direct impacts to the neighboring house. Place the windows for maximum privacy, move trash enclosures away from neighboring house and yard areas.

- Live/work units tend to drop the commercial ground floor component and close blinds. Therefore there is no “eyes on the street” benefit or commercial activity. Create true commercial at the street corner.
- Retain code required setbacks on 23rd Avenue South.
- Add more parking spaces.
- Keep building height as low as possible for neighbors.

PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance.

EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE

DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines identified by the Board as Priority Guidelines are summarized below, while all guidelines remain applicable. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

CONTEXT & SITE

CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.

CS2-A Location in the City and Neighborhood

CS2-A-1. Sense of Place: Emphasize attributes that give a distinctive sense of place. Design the building and open spaces to enhance areas where a strong identity already exists, and create a sense of place where the physical context is less established.

CS2-A-2. Architectural Presence: Evaluate the degree of visibility or architectural presence that is appropriate or desired given the context, and design accordingly.

CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces

CS2-B-1. Site Characteristics: Allow characteristics of sites to inform the design, especially where the street grid and topography create unusually shaped lots that can add distinction to the building massing.

CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street: Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

CS2-B-3. Character of Open Space: Contribute to the character and proportion of surrounding open spaces.

CS2-C Relationship to the Block

CS2-C-1. Corner Sites: Corner sites can serve as gateways or focal points; both require careful detailing at the first three floors due to their high visibility from two or more streets and long distances.

CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale

CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions: For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites: Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

The Board asked the applicant to create a very strong commercial presence at this site. The commercial use and design must not be simply live/work which often does not provide a strong commercial entity. If live/work is specified then it must emphasize its commercial nature and use on 23rd and Dearborn and must present a corner condition that is attractive, light, and large. The commercial design must include facades with full glazing and must visibly wrap around the corner and use architectural details and elements to call out its presence. The development must provide a landscape buffer at the south property line. The site design must reduce bulk impacts near the residential zone to the east.

PUBLIC LIFE

PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.

PL2-B Safety and Security

PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street: Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety: Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency: Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

The Board asked the applicant to create a fully functioning development that fosters good uses, friendly interactions, and activity on the street and within the development. Include maximum transparency and design the project to retain the commercial transparency. Include a well-articulated lighting plan to address security and a sense of safety for all users and passersby. Create residential units with physical and visual access on the streets.

PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.

PL3-A Entries

PL3-A-1. Design Objectives: Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

PL3-A-2. Common Entries: Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

PL3-A-3. Individual Entries: Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements: Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

PL3-B Residential Edges

PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy: Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential: Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses: Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

PL3-B-4. Interaction: Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

The Board directed the designers to create a fully functioning commercial development with secondary residential uses that encourage street level interaction.

DESIGN CONCEPT

DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.

DC1-A Arrangement of Interior Uses

DC1-A-1. Visibility: Locate uses and services frequently used by the public in visible or prominent areas, such as at entries or along the street front.

DC1-A-2. Gathering Places: Maximize the use of any interior or exterior gathering spaces.

DC1-A-3. Flexibility: Build in flexibility so the building can adapt over time to evolving needs, such as the ability to change residential space to commercial space as needed.

DC1-A-4. Views and Connections: Locate interior uses and activities to take advantage of views and physical connections to exterior spaces and uses.

DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation

DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design: Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

DC1-C Parking and Service Uses

DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts: Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses: Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children’s play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

DC1-C-4. Service Uses: Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

The Board required a new scheme (scheme 1A) based on scheme 1 to meet the Board priority guidelines. Guiding specifications are listed below.

DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.

DC2-A Massing

DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses: Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass: Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition

DC2-B-1. Façade Composition: Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs— considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

DC2-B-2. Blank Walls: Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

DC2-C Secondary Architectural Features

DC2-C-1. Visual Depth and Interest: Add depth to facades where appropriate by incorporating balconies, canopies, awnings, decks, or other secondary elements into the façade design. Add detailing at the street level in order to create interest for the pedestrian and encourage active street life and window shopping (in retail areas).

DC2-C-2. Dual Purpose Elements: Consider architectural features that can be dual purpose— adding depth, texture, and scale as well as serving other project functions.

DC2-C-3. Fit With Neighboring Buildings: Use design elements to achieve a successful fit between a building and its neighbors.

DC2-D Scale and Texture

DC2-D-1. Human Scale: Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

DC2-D-2. Texture: Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or “texture,” particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

DC2-E Form and Function

DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility: Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

The Board directed the applicant to create a unique and quality commercial development at the site.

DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.

DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials

DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials: Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials: Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning: Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

DC4-D-4. Place Making: Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

The Board required attention to full landscape detailing at the MUP stage.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES

At the time of the Early Design Guidance the following departures were discussed:

1. Street level use. **(SMC 23.47A.005):** The Code requires specific percentages of commercial versus residential uses at the street level. The applicant proposes more than 20% street facing residential.

The Board is disinclined to entertain a departure from this development standard.

2. Setbacks above 13 feet. **(SMC 23.47A.014):** The Code requires a setback of 15 feet above 13 feet at a residential zone edge. The applicant proposes a setback of 5 feet above 13 feet

The Board is disinclined to entertain a departure from this development standard.

3. Street level development standards. **(SMC 23.47A.008)**: The Code requires 30 foot average depth of street level commercial space. The applicant proposes less than 30 feet depth at ground level.

The Board is disinclined to entertain a departure from this development standard.

4. Driveway width **(SMC 23.47A.030)**: The Code requires a 22 foot wide driveway. The applicant proposes less.

The Board is inclined to entertain a departure from this development standard.

RECOMMENDATIONS

BOARD DIRECTION

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended that the applicant develop a modified scheme 1, scheme 1A. They specified several items to design a better project including the following;

- Keep a 22 foot driveway at the east property line.
- Soften the driveway surface by using “grasscrete” or other product that supports vehicles and provides a grass or grass-like surface.
- Provide at least three to five feet of landscaping along the southern property line to separate buildings, walkway, and parking from the neighboring uses.
- Allow a three foot setback on 23rd Avenue South.

The applicant will submit a scheme1A to the planner. The applicant will work with the planner to develop scheme 1A and then move forward to MUP application.